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TAGS: MOPS, PEPR, SOPN, IS, IZ, LE
SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF ISRAELI RAID ON IRAQ
1. THE JUNE 11 EDITION OF BEIRUT' ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWS DIGEST, THE MIDDLE EAST REPORTER, PUBLISHED AN ASSESSMENT OF THE POLITICAL IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE ATTACK AGAINST IRAQ'S NUCLEAR REACTOR. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT.
2. BEGIN TEXT: THE IMPACT OF ISRAELI RAID AND ARAB OPTIONS. THE ARAB LEAGUE COUNCIL IS DUE TO HOLD AN EMERGENCY MEETING AT FOREIGN MINISTERS LEVEL IN BAGHLAD TODAY(THURSDAY) TO

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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CONSIDER WHAT ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN ON ISRAEL AIR RAID ON IRAQ LAST SUNDAY. IRAQ HAS ALSO ASKED FOR A U.S. SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON THE SAME ISSUE. ALTHOUGH IT IS STILL UNDERTAIN EXACTLY WHAT STAND THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS WILL DECIDE ON, IT WILL MOST CERTAINLY BE CRITICAL OF ISRAEL.
3. THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON IRAQ'S NUCLEAR REACTOR NEAR BAGHDAD HAS OBVIOUSLY HIT THE ARAB WORLD WITH AN IMPACT PERHAPS EQUAL TO THE ARAB HUMILIATING DEFEAT IN THE 1967 WAR WITH ISRAEL. AN OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE IMMEDIATE IMPRESSIONS OF THE RAID ON REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS WOULD SHOW THE FOLLOWING.
4. IT HAS BROUGHT THE ARABS CLOSER TOGETHER, AT LEAST IN THEIR PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENT OF CONDEMNING THE ATTACK AND SUPPORTING IRAQ, BUT IT IS YET TO BE SEEN WHAT THEY

COULD DO COLLECTIVELY AND IN PRACTICAL TERMS AGAINST ISRAEL. INTER-ARAB DIFFERENCES ARE SO NUMEROUS THAT THERE CAN BE LITTLE CHANCE OF A DRASTIC COLLECTIVE ACTION OF ANY SIGNIFICANT EFFECT. HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL IRAQI RETALIATION OF THE KIND THAT ISRAELI OFFICIALS AND MEDIA HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT, SUCH AS THE USE OF IRAQ'S SOVIET-MADE T-22 BOMBERS, OR SCUD SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES, BOTH OF WHICH COULD REACH ISRAELI TARGETS. OTHER POSSIBILITIES WERE ALSO MENTIONED, SUCH AS A LIMITED MILITARY OPERATION THROUGH JORDAN, OR SOME FORM OF VIOLENT ACTION AGAINST ISRAELI TARGETS ABROAD.

5. THERE IS GENERAL ARAB CONSENSUS THAT THE UNITED STATES SHARES A LOT OF THE BLAME FOR THE ISRAELI RAID, WHICH WAS CARRIED OUT THROUGH THE USE OF AMERICAN-SUPPLIED AIRCRAFT. SOME NEWS PAPERS IN BEIRUT YESTERDAY UNDERLINED

A STATEMENT BY A U.S. OFFICIAL IN WASHINGTON WHO SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAD KNOWN ABOUT ISRAEL'S PLANS TO ATTACH THE IRAQI REACTOR, BUT WAS SURPRISED BY THE TIMING OF IT. THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF THE RAID ON AMERICA'S IMAGE AND PRESTIGE IN THE ARAB WORLD HAS ALSO BEEN SUBSTANTIAL.

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6. PRESIDENT REAGAN'S ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN AT PAINS TRYING TO CONVINCE THE ARABS THAT THE SOVIET UNION POSED AN IMMINENT DANGER TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE ISRAELI RAID NOW TENDS TO SUPPORT THE ARAB ARGUMENT THAT THE REAL DANGER IS ISRAEL AND NOT THE SOVIET INION. THEREFORE, U.S. STRATEGIC PLANS OF CREATING AN ANTI-SOVIET ARAB BLOC APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DRASTICALLY UNDERMINED AS A RESULT OF THE ISRAELI RAID. NEEDLESS TO SAY THAT, IN CONTRAST, THE RAID PLAYED PERFECTLY WELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH HAS BEEN SUPPORTING THE ARAB STAND IN THE CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL.
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7. BY THE SAME TOKEN, THE RAID HAS STRENGTHENED THE HARDLINE POSITION OF ARAB HARDLINERS (OUTSPOKEN REJECTIONISTS OF THE U.S.-SPONSORED CAMP DAVID PEACE PROCESS) AND EMBARRASSED AMERICA'S ARAB FRIENDS AND ALLIES IN THE REGION. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN, THEREFORE, WHETHER A CONSERVATIVE PRO-WESTERN STATE LIKE SAUDI ARABIA WILL STILL BE ABLE TO EXERCISE AN EFFECTIVE MODERATING ROLE IN THE POLITICS AND ECONOMICS OF THE REGION.
8. FOR THE SAUDIS, THE RAID WAS EVEN MORE EMBARRASSING BECAUSE IT CAME AT A TIME WHEN THEY WERE LEADING AN ARAB DIPLOMATIC EFFORT TO HELP THE U.S. RESOLVE THE SO-CALLED MISSLE CRISIS, WHICH AGAIN THREATENED OPEN HOSTILITIES BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL. THERE WERE REPORTS

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YESTERDAY THAT U.S. SPECIAL MIDDLE EAST EMISSARY PHILIP C. HABIB, WHO WAS ON HIS WAY TO SAUDI ARABIA EARLY THIS WEEK, WAS TOLD HE WAS NOT WELCOME THERE. HE REPORTEDLY HAD TO STAY OVERNIGHT IN ATHENS BEFORE PROCEEDING TO BEIRUT TO FIND OUT WHETHER THERE WAS STILL ANY GROUND FOR HIM TO RESUME HIS MEDIATION IN THE MISSILE CRISIS.
9. STRATEGICALLY, THE RAID COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO STOP THE ARABS FROM INVESTING THEIR OIL WEALTH IN DEVELOPING THEIR NUCLEAR POTENTIAL. IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER SAADOUN HAMMADI AFFIRMED THIS POINT WHEN HE BRIEFED ARAB DIPLOMATS IN BAGHDAD ON THE ISRAELI ATTACK. " IT WILL INCREASE OUR DETERMINATION TO BRIDGE THE TECHNOLOGICAL GAP" WITH ISRAEL--AN EFFORT WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "MOST DREADFUL" TO THE JEWISH STATE. ISRAELI COMMENTATORS AND ANALYSTS ALSO AGREE.
10. WHAT CAN THE ARABS DO? IT IS DIFFCULT TO IMAGINE HOW THE ARABS CAN HARM ISRAEL MILITARILY MORE THAN THE HARM IT HAS DONE TO ITSELF POLITICALLY. BEING DIVIDED
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AS THEY ARE, ONE CAN HADLY EXPECT THEM TO COME OUT WITH A COLLECTIVE PLAN FOR AN EFFECTIVE MILITARY REPRISAL, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT EGYPT, THE BIGGEST AND MOST POWERFUL ARAB STATE, HAS A PEACE TREATY WITH ISRAEL.
11. BUT WHILE SUCH COLLECTIVE ACTION AGAINST ISRAEL APPEARS TO BE A REMOTE POSSIBILITY, THERE ARE SOME OPTIONS WHICH THE ARABS MIGHT BE ABLE TO TAKE PROVIDED THERE IS CONSENSUS AND THE WILLINGNESS TO TAKE THEM. ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL CHADLI AL KLEIBI, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE BEIRUT ENGLISH-LANGUAGE MAGAZINE, MONDAY MORNING, THIS WEEK MENTIONED WEAT HE CALLED "LAST-RESORT OPTIONS," WHICH HAD BEEN AGREED ON BY THE ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS IN TUNIS LAST MONTH. THESE OPTIONS, STILL SECRET, WERE TO BE PUT INTO EFFECT AGAINST THE UNITED STATES, IF ISRAEL ATTACKED SYRIA OVER THE MISSILE CRISIS.
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12. "THESE MEASURES ARE A MATTER OF CONTINGENCY PLANNING." KLEIBI SAID. HE ADDED, "WE ARE NOT EAGER TO APPLY SANCTIONS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES."
13. SINCE AN ARAB WAR AGAINST ISRAEL IS HIGHLY IMPROBABLE, THERE REMAIN THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL OPTIONS, WHICH CAN BOTH BE APPLIED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES, ISRAEL'S PRINCIPAL SUPPORTER AND ARMS SUPPLIER. THE CALL FOR UNLEASHING THE ARAB OIL WEAPON IS NOT UNFAMILIAR WHENEVER THERE IS AN ESCALATION IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT. IN FACT, MEMBERS OF THE KUWAITI PARLIAMENT CALLED FOR AN OIL EMBARGO AGAINST THE UNITED STATES IN RETALIATION TO THE
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ISRAELI AIR ATTACK ON IRAQ. "WE CALL ON ARAB OIL EXPORTERS TO REDUCE PRODUCTION DRASTICALLY AND HALT OIL SHIPMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES," ONE DEPUTY WAS REPORTED AS SAYING. ANOTHER SAID, "WE SHOULD HALT ALL DOLLAR INVESTMENTS AT ONE. THE UNITED STATES HAS INSULTED US." KUWAITIS, LIKE MOST OTHER ARABS, ARE CONVINCED THAT THE U.S. IS THE ONLY POWER IN THE WORLD THAT COULD RESTRAIN ISRAEL.
14. IRAQ ITSELF IS AN ADVOCATE OF WHAT IT CALLS "SELECTIVE EMBARGO" ON OIL SHIPMENTS TO THE WESTERN WORLD. ITS PROPOSAL OF MAKING ARAB OIL LESS ACCESSIBLE TO COUNTRIES THAT SUPPORT ISRAEL HAS ALREADY BEEN CONSIDERED BY ARAB OIL MINISTERS, BUT NO COLLECTIVE ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON IT. IRAQ ALSO ADVOCATES WIDER ARAB COOPERATION WITH
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COUNTRIES THAT SHOW UNDERSTANDING OF ARAB GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS.
15. ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL, THE ARABS MIGHT INTENSIFY THEIR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO REVIVE A RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE IN MOROCCO LAST YEAR CALLING FOR THE EXPULSION OF ISRAEL FROM THE UNITED NATIONS, OR AT LEAST THE IMPOSITION OF SANCATIONS AGAINST THE JEWISH STATE. THE RESOLUTION, WHICH HAD THE SUPPORT OF ALL THE 43 MOSLEM NATIONS AND MANY IN THE THIRD WORLD, WAS THREATENED WITH THE U.S. VETO AT THE UNITED NATIONS. END TEXT.
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